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ABSTRACT

The training of all people on a correctional institution staff is discussed. The point is made that there are special problems about penal institutions in trying to effect behavior change in that people are living there against their will. This circumstance produces a basis for a subculture. It has been found that the criminal subculture is the most important dynamic in the correctional institution, as far as the operation of the institution and the training programs within it are concerned. This subculture contains: (1) the "adapters," or those people who come into an institution with very little prior experience of living in jails, (2) college kids who are caught for using "pot," another type of "adapters," (3) the "solid," the man who teaches the new people the ways of the subculture. It is stated that the most crucial consideration in the operation of an institution is that the warden's office or the administrator's office must be the center of operation. For purposes of this discussion, an "authority figure" is defined as anyone who works in an institution, excluding the inmates. Of special concern is the correctional officer, whose potential as a behavior change agent is an almost untapped resource. In order to change an inmate's behavior, a correctional officer must: (1) Have some contact with him; (2) Build up his trust; and (3) Help him out in a tough situation. (CK)

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CHANGING INMATE BEHAVIOR

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Elmore, Alabama

Presented
at the
Interagency Workshop of The Institute of Contemporary
Corrections and the Behavioral Sciences
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Introductory remarks by Professor John Watkins

This evening we have with us a gentleman who has made great strides in the field of corrections in his own native state and has been widely quoted in all of the states. His programs have been followed in several states besides Alabama. I am not going to give you his background, you have it on your vita; as a way of introduction, however, allow me, if I may, to read a brief quotation from Dr. Karl Menninger's book entitled *The Crime of Punishment* where Menninger speaks of what Warden Watkins is doing at Draper Correctional Center. On page 233 he states, in talking about innovative correctional programs, "Another interesting experiment is that of Warden John C. Watkins of the Draper Correctional Center in Elmore, Alabama. Warden Watkins, a sociologist, assisted by Dr. John McKee, who is a psychologist, set up a program designed to break up the convict structure and to establish a different kind of atmosphere in which the emphasis was placed on restructuring the individual's personality and providing education to fit the prisoner for a better life. Instead of blaming the prisoner for his failure, they try to enlist his cooperation in making a scientific study of what went wrong in his life and what was needed to change it. They have reported that, in five years, seventy-five inmates obtained high school diplomas, thirteen paroled inmates have entered college on scholarships for ex-prisoners, and one of them is eligible for Phi Beta Kappa. Twenty-five percent of the students have postponed their parole to finish their education program, and only 7 percent of the prison school enrollment became dropouts. About 65 percent of the students have been given early parole dates. The education program received grants of nearly half a million dollars from the National Institute of Mental Health and the Manpower Development and Training Act."

In conclusion, Dr. Menninger says of the program, "The educational techniques used at Draper have already been adapted in penal institutions in Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Hawaii." It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you the gentleman who is largely responsible for these innovations, Warden Watkins of the Draper Correctional Center.

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The things I will talk about are things I have done myself and have taught other people how to do. Since I have done these things only on a small scale, my unfinished business is applying them across the board in such a way as to affect the total institution. What I am talking about is training all of our people to do the kind of things I have trained this small number of our people to do. Training of the total institutional staff is what we are now seeking to accomplish.

What we are doing at Draper is not another "do-gooder" idea as the police and custody people are prone to view most rehabilitation efforts. My approach takes this common reaction into consideration primarily because I started off as a cop and because I am, therefore, very aware of how cops and other custody people view many of these efforts. And while I was trained in the so-called treatment social sciences, I came to the Draper Correctional Center as a custody man in charge of custody and discipline. It is in the fifteen years I have served at Draper that I learned many of the things I am going to be talking about.

One of the first things to consider is that people in corrections say that you can't positively change behavior in an institution and then, in the same breath, say that people get worse in institutions. We say that the learning process that makes people better or worse is the same.

There are, however, special problems about penal institutions. They resemble military establishments, hospitals, and certain kinds of schools, in that you have a group of people living together in a highly structured situation. In each of these particular situations you have an informal human organization that is different from the formal, largely because the people living there are together against their will.

One of the conditions that makes a correctional institution different from these other types of people-living-together situations is that you have hostile, angry, and aggressive men held together by force and threat of force. These men are not allowed to express their anger at their captors; yet their captors pick up the anger directed at them and return it openly. And this imbalance, of course, produces a basis for a subculture. I was

riding not long ago by some inmates who were working when one of them waved his hand at me, and an old-time correctional man who was with me said, "Now he doesn't really mean that; he really means, 'You sorry son of a bitch.'"

That officer is not far from being right. When a group of men must swallow and hide their hostility and anger, it takes some very dangerous forms. And remember, the only time prisoners can vent their anger is in a riot, or in a strike, or in some outside investigation in which they are participants.

The criminal subculture, in the opinion of many people who work directly with inmates, is the most important variable, the most important dynamic in the institution, as far as the operation of the institution and the training programs within it are concerned. You can have the very best training programs, the best ideas, the best philosophy, and the most highly trained personnel, but if you have a strong criminal subculture in operation, one which is effective in achieving its goals, you are wasting both your time and your money.

Now, let me briefly describe the typical criminal subculture in terms of how certain inmate "types" react to it, based on some work which we did at Draper.

First, as we began to search out the so-called "psychopath," the term that psychologists and psychiatrists have tossed around for several years, we found a general lack of inmates to classify under such a label. It seemed that the inmates' behavior would not consistently fit the label. Suddenly, we realized we had practically run out of psychopaths in the correctional business.

This situation was typical. Traditional labels did not and do not functionally and effectively account for inmate behavior as it relates to a criminal subculture.

We found at Draper that we had to shift to some more workable system of labeling to describe those with whom we worked. In our new system, then, we called the first type of inmates "adapters." These are people who come into an institution with very little prior experience of living in jails, running with gangs, and that sort of thing. An adapter might be the guy, for instance, who, by chance, came home, found his wife with another man, and killed either or both of them. Or, maybe he got greedy at the race track and decided to take some of the bank's money. These sorts of crimes are typical of an "adapter."

We are now getting a new breed of inmates in penal institutions: college kids who are caught for using "pot," for instance. While the new breed of inmates may differ from

the old in terms of their potential contributions to the institution--college kids are very active in our rehabilitative programs--they are classified by us as "adapters" because they, too, act like other people simply in order to survive. A strong and repressive criminal subculture forces even the new breed into the "adapter" role.

The last and more influential type of inmate in the subculture is the so-called "solid." Solids are those called the "different people." In Mississippi, they are called the "good people." I don't know what they are called in Texas. The solid is the man who is the elected representative of the culture. He is the man who belongs; he carries the culture on from so-called "generation to generation." He teaches the new people the ways of the subculture, while preferring to stay in the background.

You people in correctional work and police work know him from the interrogation room. He wouldn't tell you the time of day; he's moralistic about the system. You say to him, "Look, Jack, you know we've got you in a real tight. Now how about telling us who brought you these amphetamine tablets last Sunday afternoon." And he says, "I couldn't do that; I couldn't walk down the hall; I couldn't look at my face in the mirror." This is a very moral man. He believes this. He is just moral for a system different from ours. He believes in his system's morality and in living up to his beliefs; the other men, the other inmates, look up to him. He is the strong image to them. He is the man who controls. He is the man who decides if you are going to have trouble--he and a few others. He is the man who, where a real subculture exists, decides whether a program is going to work. A lot of correctional people think they are running their institution, but, if they really dig down and dissect and scratch around, they'll often find they are not running things after all. This kind of person--the "solid"--is running things, or could be, depending upon the institution and its particular set of conditions.

The change, or, if you will, "conversion," of the "solid" is one of the primary things I wanted to talk about. This person turns out to be the hard-core criminal. He has been around a long time and has had a sort of *education*. Let me give you, briefly, a little about his background.

Certain things about the so-called solid's personal history are true with 99 percent consistency. First of all, and this is very important, he comes from a home without a father image. For whatever reason, there was no father there, or, in cases where the father was present, he was weak.

Perhaps I can best describe the so-called solid through an illustration. One particular young man I remember had all the characteristics of a solid. The kid had been in a number of institutions. Never had he been accompanied by his father, nor did his father ever come to see him. He hated the cops, hated an institution, hated the establishment, and had carried on a variety of illegal activities. True to form, you couldn't get him to tell you the time of day.

One day I was told that his mother and father wanted to see me, and, frankly, I was astonished. Now, I thought, this guy has a father on the scene. It was the first time in my life I had ever seen the solid's father appear. If there is anything I know to be consistent, it is that the habitual offender, the hard-core offender comes from a fatherless home. Of course, we know people can sometimes be psychologically fatherless, and this was the case in my illustration. Here comes the mother into my office. She is about six feet ahead of the father, and he is kind of meekly following "mama." He sits down in a chair and "mama" sits on the arm of the chair next to my desk. Then she starts telling me what is wrong with the boy while he merely sits back. Although he was called father, he was not participating in the interaction as a father; psychologically, he was absent.

So this is the background for this particular inmate--their boy. He was typical of many who, in order to save their "maleness" in the preadolescent period, had to escape mama. Of course if she castrates him, envelops him--however she does it--then he doesn't get away from home, and he becomes a very nonaggressive, nice little boy with some other problems.

But let's say he escapes the family; he escapes mama. You ask him a thousand times, "Who took your father's place?" and he says, always, "Them other boys I ran with." So he finds in his peer group (a normal relationship for boys in preadolescence) an intensified new relationship in which he does find his maleness and which saves him from mama. But in the process he learns a whole new ball game. He becomes a new man in a new system. Here, in this intense learning situation of the boy gang, he throws aside all his other family beliefs--what little he could get from a weak family--and becomes part of a gang. If he doesn't smoke, he learns to. If he doesn't fool with pot, he might start. If he has not earlier shot cops, or robbed banks, he might become involved in these sorts of things. He does whatever the group wants; the group's system of values becomes his system.

He learns several things in this intense little group. He learns the *modus operandi* of stealing and of escaping the police and of avoiding the police; and he learns that it is right morally. Any group, to be effective, has got to have this "right" thing about it--a sense of self-righteousness about it.

This is the lad, then, who is trained to be a criminal and comes into the institution. Eventually, his mode of operation got him into trouble. Instead of working, he was out stealing, robbing, or whatever. So he wound up in the juvenile home. If he lived in Alabama, it was the Alabama Boys Industrial School. Then he graduated to a national training school. Then, back to the state institution and around like this until, when you get him and he is, say, 22 or 23 years old, he is a well trained criminal. He has been in trouble over half of his entire life. He got in trouble when he was 9 or 10 years old and has been in either a juvenile or an adult correctional institution since then.

This, then, is the typical hard-core member of an institutional population. Guys like him man the center of influence in the institution. These are the guys who know the business. The other guys who come to the institution, the freshmen, have to learn it. And, according to the subculture, it can be learned only to a point without the appropriate background--the fatherless home, the grasping, castrating mother, the intensive boy gang relationship, and the juvenile institution experiences. Without these prerequisites, one can never be a really "good convict," a "good solid."

Now let's take a typical institution; let's say you have these guys I just described--tough, aggressive, held against their will--operating a criminal subculture in which the officers, the correctional people, are their natural enemies. There may be a twinkle in their eye, or a smile on their faces, but do not be deceived. The true members of the criminal subculture, the solids, hate you. They are supposed to hate you; this is what they have been trained to do. In their eyes, you are a cop, or a warden, or a correctional officer, and thereby *a priori* a target for their hatred.

With this situation in mind, the proposition that I put forth, and which I think we have very effectively demonstrated, is that such things as the dehumanizing of inmates and the natural anger which the inmates have for the administration can be converted into a very constructive situation.

Consider, for example, the role of the correctional officer. A long time ago the correctional officers resorted to beating the fellows and kicking them, as did the wardens and the police. They abused them and dehumanized them. And the results of this were

pretty obvious; treating people in this manner did not rid them of the offending behaviors; it merely suppressed them.

Now there has been a change in this. A new type of "treatment" relationship has replaced the custody and treatment which used to exist almost exclusively. However, this does not mean that all of a sudden we began to "mama" inmates. The hard-core offender has already been "mama'd to death." What it does mean is that some of the untapped, potential behavior change situations are being put to use.

For instance, let's take a typical inmate-correctional officer situation. The inmate hates Lt. Smith. "Hell, he is the worst guy in the world. How I hate this guy, I wish I...." The list of things he wishes would happen to Lt. Smith is endless. But just suppose the lieutenant were to become his model. After all, he sees and is supposed to be under the control of Lt. Smith every day, a fact that makes Lt. Smith a very important person in his life. Why shouldn't somebody who is a very important person in one's life become his model, rather than somebody who sits behind a desk, like the warden or the psychiatrist, and talks about things over the guy's head? Why not somebody who is right on the scene with him? So these are the kinds of things I am going to discuss with you: how to utilize or turn around some of these relationships, some of these dynamics that have in the past guaranteed that the inmate will turn out a rougher guy when he leaves the institution than he was when he came; some of the influences which guarantee that he is going to try to shoot it out with cops, if that is his line, or guarantee that he is going to try to rob some more banks.

But before I go any further, I need to mention something about the administration of an institution in which you are trying to change behavior. Now remember institutions haven't always been run with the idea of modifying behavior; that has not been the name of the game. In the past, people thought that if you properly punished people they wouldn't get back into trouble. Well, the only thing wrong with that was that there seemed to be more and more people coming into the institution, instead of less. So obviously the punishment approach was not working.

There are, however, other institutions in which the mission is to change the behavior of the inmates to such a degree that they can live outside successfully. And, of course, the administration of an institution like this is different from the old "treat them rough" idea. In my opinion, the most crucial consideration in the operation of an institution is that the warden's office or the administrator's office must be the center of operation.

It is like the office of a captain on a ship of war. Whatever policy is to be applied and enforced within, the institution gains its real strength from the endorsement and actual assistance of the warden's or administrator's office. Unless you, the administrator, are in favor of the kind of treatment operation I am suggesting, unless you are for it all the way, then it really counts as nothing. You are wasting money and other people's time by bringing in a very highly motivated young psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, or whatever, who says, "Look, I want to rehabilitate these people and you have nothing to lose. This will look good to the commissioner, to the legislature, and to the public in general." If this poor guy goes in there, starts to change the world, and all of a sudden finds out that you are really not for what he is doing, pretty soon the operation shuts down and the guy leaves. He is disappointed, disgusted, perhaps even disillusioned. He has wasted his own time. He has wasted the taxpayer's money.

So it has got to all come through the warden's office. He has got to really know what is happening and he has got to know what they are doing and why they are doing it, and he has got to back up the people in it by pushing them along. And he has got to understand that it is not just teaching a guy welding. Teaching a guy a trade is good, but we knew a long time ago that there was much more to staying out of prison than just having a trade. What the guy needs is an altered value system, one that is considerably more compatible with the value system that prevails in free society, rather than the one he adopted when he joined the boy gang which led to the criminal subculture. This is the only way the guy can come to belong to our world; and this he must do a little bit if he is to survive in it.

What I am going to talk about now is the use of an authority figure as a change agent. For purposes of this discussion, I shall define "authority figure" as anyone who works in an institution, excluding, of course, the inmates who work there. However, I am especially concerned with the correctional officer. The correctional officer's potential as a behavior change agent is an almost untapped resource.

Many of you, I'm sure, are familiar with the old saw of about twenty years ago that anybody in an authority position cannot be involved in a behavior change operation. Some people pushed this so hard that the treatment people had their little thing going, the custody people had their thing going, and the inmates had the biggest thing of all going; they were playing one against the other. Consequently, the only changes that were taking place were in the behavior of the personnel, not in that of the inmates. Now this

is what we don't want. We want to try to change others' behavior, not them change ours. Certainly the modern behavioral sciences would agree that an authority figure can indeed be an effective agent of behavioral change.

An interesting thing happened to me when I was an intern in criminology in a federal institution. I was asked to evaluate the programs going on there. This was a very sophisticated treatment program, superimposed on the various sophisticated custody programs already existent. They had psychiatrists and psychologists and case workers for every so many people. They had everything that you were supposed to have in an institution at that time. I had them put me in isolation, and I got to be one of the boys; I really was in on what was going on in the joint. One of the questions I asked these guys was, "Who helped you the most here?" Well, of course, I fully expected them to say the psychiatrist, or the vocational teacher, or maybe even the chaplain. But the answer I received astonished everybody. It came out to be a great big correctional officer with a red mustache and a voice that boomed all over the place. So I spent a lot of time with this fellow, and I learned a lot of important things from him.

Later I began to see some other similar things happening. Here was a correctional officer changing behavior and not knowing what he was doing, nor fully aware of why he was doing it. Later still, when I was a warden in another institution, I had a kitchen man who could do this. He also was unaware of what he was doing. His English was horrible, his education minimal, and he didn't know psychoanalysis from anthropology. But he could do things with boys that other people couldn't do. So we forgot about technical and theoretical explanations and tried to find out what he was doing. As I talked to other people around the country in the correctional business, I found that they too had officers who were doing something about people's behavior. But nobody knew quite what they were doing.

The role of the correctional officer or a behavioral change agent is a relatively new one. When it was decided that the "treat 'em rough" idea of the correctional officer was not working, institutions shifted to "treatment," using, almost exclusively, new and specialized staffs. What resulted for correctional officers was a general loss of status and a near total separation from the treatment process–both from the teams and their efforts.

However, as the new treatment staffs continued their efforts to change inmate behavior, it became apparent that their methods were also demonstrating negligible results. If recidivism rates didn't, in fact, continue to climb, they were certainly not showing

any decreases. It became apparent that a truly effective treatment program could not be the responsibility of any select group of people. Everyone would have to be involved. Nobody has a monopoly on changing behavior. The correctional officer, the guy on the operational level of an institution, has as much of an investment and vital role in changing inmate behavior as does the clinical psychologist or psychiatrist.

We found, in fact, that the professionals, the psychologists and psychiatrists, have their best, their longest suit, their most effective impact when functioning in a role like that of a coach for a football team. They coach the rest of the team to do the work; rarely do they see inmates, except perhaps for a few, say, in a group therapy session. Their main function is to train correctional officers in the techniques of behavioral change.

So, as a result of this treatment evolution, the correctional officer has found a new role. He now has something he can do, something which has the potential of being effective. In fact, unless this guy, the correctional officer, as well as all of the rest of the staff, are involved in changing behavior, I think we are not going to advance anymore. But, if we do properly train, and properly follow-up, and properly support the total treatment team, we can produce, especially with the assistance of the new behavior modification techniques, effective and immediate changes.

Now, how do we begin this process? Let's say you are a correctional officer, how are you going to start changing an inmate's behavior? This is the essential question.

First, you have got to have some contact with him. Now there are all kinds of ways you get in contact with an inmate. I will run over many of them here and now. Remember, now, I'm talking about the inmate. I'm talking about the real tough guy, the troublemaker. I'm talking about the guy who in most institutions you keep locked up, the guy you are afraid of, for whom there is no hope. The one we say that this is the 10 or 20 percent who can't be helped. This is the guy who has been in and in and in. This is the guy who the people hate and who hates them. He is the "solid." He is the guy who wouldn't tell you anything. He is the guy who, if another inmate acts like he is friendly with you, will jump on the other inmate and that sort of thing. This is the man I'm talking about. This is the certain recidivist. Let's see what we can do with him. How are you going to make contact with him? Well, you may, of course, get to know him through custodial action, routinely catching him doing something, or the contact may be through the job. You may be supervising him on a work detail.

Incidentally, I'm being a little partial to the correctional officer. One of the most effective relationships, also, is with the vocational instructor, because this again resembles the old father-son relationship in which the father teaches the boy how to do a certain kind of job and gives him some of his own social values that go along with being a father and of learning this.

But to return to the correctional officer again, he may make contact with an inmate through referrals from the schoolteacher, from the psychologist, or from another correctional officer, who says, "Look, ah, Mr. Jones, can you help this young fellow, this Jack Simmons, out? We give up." As another possibility, the inmate may come as a referral from some of his own people, his family or friends. They might know the officer and ask him, "Can you help this guy out? We can't." Or a referral may come from another inmate even. He says, "Mr. Jones, will you try to help out Simmons?" There are a variety of ways in which contact can be made, but let's assume that this guy causes so much trouble that you are just curious about just what the devil is going on in this guy's head. Why is he causing all this trouble? So you set about. You are going to do something about this guy.

All right, now, as a custody officer, you can't all of a sudden make your move. You can't start following this guy around, but you can start seeing him a little more often. Finally, he asks you something. Remember you have a monopoly on information compared to him, so he might want to know something from you. What time are we going to have the new visiting thing, or are we going to be allowed to listen to the President's Address, or some little bit of something like this. So he is kind of testing you out. And you give him the information. He is a solid now. He is not supposed to deal with a correctional person--his natural enemy--except to achieve something for his system, to get something from you for them.

Maybe after this little warm-up he will decide he wants to get something new, so he might ask you, "Now, Mr. Jones, I just didn't have a chance to mail this letter because the post office closed early, ten minutes early, and this is for my mother, and if I don't mail it today...," and so on. And Mr. Jones says, "Well, I'm sorry, you have to make some other arrangements. I'm not mailing it for you." Then, maybe a little later on the inmate may ask, "Would you lend me fifty cents or something?" You say, "Well, I'm sorry, I can't do that either." Pretty soon, in a good system, in a good criminal subculture, he has to give a reason why he talks to a correctional officer. So then he tells his buddies,

"Well, I'm really conning him. I'm really getting something out of it." But then he is not getting anything out of it, so he has to change his style. Now is the time to change the style of the relationship.

Now what are you going to do next? Well, you attempt to set up a situation where you can function as a reinforcer. For example, you might try finding out some things about Simmons from his friends. You say to one of the guys that he knows, "What about this Simmons boy? What is with him?" You are just fishing, of course, for whatever you can learn about Simmons. There will naturally be a resistance to talking with you, but I have seen it where one will talk. He might say, "You know what he is doing? He has some Nembutal, and he has a joint, and he has been shooting himself and some other guys. He is not really an addict, but this is his big thing. See, he controls a lot of people with it." And this guy then says, "For God's sake, don't let him know I told you." He is terrified, and you assure him, "Don't worry; I won't let him in on our secret."

Some of these techniques I'm suggesting may sound a little cruel, but remember I'm speaking of "shortcuts" that will enable you to make contact with the inmate and to eventually assist him in solving some of his problems.

But to continue with the illustration, let's say you don't know where the Nembutal and other drugs are. Obviously, you would go and get them if you did. You do not know where the stuff is, but you are going to take advantage of the situation in order to act as a reinforcer. You want to build Simmons up, to strengthen his ego, while not saying anything about him that is untrue. Well, every human being is certainly worth praising, if he does something to be praised for. You now have this little relationship so you have a reason to talk to him and you say, "Look, Simmons, say, I hear, I don't know, but I just get the word that you have been fooling with some drugs, and say now, man, that is bad, you know." Of course, he will immediately say, "No Sir! I wouldn't think of such a thing. Who told you that? I wish he would come out here and I could get it out of him." You say, "Well, I just hope this isn't true, you know, because it is very disappointing to me because I have come to respect you as an individual." So pretty soon you do get the word about just where the stuff is. Then you and some other officers make a raid and you catch Simmons with the medicine, and nobody but Simmons, say. And so he gets arrested and gets brought before the court. Now at this stage it is time for you to really move in. And remember you are now moving from Simmons' enemy to his friend in order to become the most effective reinforcer of this relationship.

Now remember this relates back to what this guy most needed and most sought after–a father image, a male model. So now you are becoming his male model, which you will use to modify his behavior or to help modify his behavior.

You may say something like this, "Say, look, this is a terrible thing. You have got yourself in trouble. Now I can't get you out of this because you are going to have to pay the price. You knew what the rule was." You kind of take full advantage of the situation, exaggerating and making it a little worse than it is. Simmons is really shook up now. And while you are talking to him you kind of hint, you know, don't tell him, that some of his buddies, his peer group from whom he gets his anti-administration strength and who reinforce his criminal behavior, kind of hint that these people, some of these people, told you about his medicine. This is a terrible thing for him to discover, that these people would tell on him. It is a great, great shock for him to know that he has been told on. But he sees that this group, these people who have been supporting him, has failed him.

And now you who had been his natural enemy are coming into a new role with him. Now you say, "Look, I can't get you out of this, but they are talking about transferring you to maximum custody, the super maximum custody inn over there, and taking your good time and doing all this. I can't keep you from going to solitary or lockup, but I will tell you what I will do. I'll go to court with you, and I will talk to the lieutenant and tell him that you have been acting, up until now, like a decent man." This need not be insincere; he has been acting decently. But now, in his time of trouble, he has an advocate. He has somebody to stand up for him. Thus, as you build yourself a relationship with him and his peer group is discredited, a whole new ball game starts.

Let's concentrate now on some things that you say to this guy at different times in this talk. This is a very critical interaction situation. We are dealing with a man with a lot of emotions. Here is a man who used to hate any correctional officer, who would have liked to run over him, who would have liked to stab him. But now you–the correctional officer–are helping him, in a vague sort of way that his father never did. You are the guy he is beginning to trust, beginning to lean on. And this is terribly important, that you break down the inmate's belief that you cannot be trusted.

At this point, you have worked yourself into the position of being a reinforcer by taking advantage of your custodial position. You have perhaps exaggerated the seriousness

of his situation, but you are on the verge of a real breakthrough–getting him to trust you. You need the next step.

So you say, "Gamble with me." You know these guys love to gamble. And you have admitted that you like to gamble, and he is far enough along in trusting you that he admits that he gambles. "O.K.," he says, "sure, I gamble." "Gamble with me," you say. "Gamble that I am going to be square with you. Gamble that I am not going to turn my back on you. Gamble that I am not going to exploit you. Gamble that I am your friend and want nothing from you except to see you act better, to see you become a very successful young man and go out and live in the streets."

This is the first time he has ever heard anybody who really thought he could make it outside. He is very successful in his culture, but he has never really thought he could make it in the free world. All right, so now you're kind of a friend instead of an enemy. You say,"Look, now, you have been shot down, so I am never ever going to let you do all these things again. You are not going to play the big wheel with these other guys. I am going to be breathing down your neck every day when you get out of lockup. But let me be your friend and then I will help you do some other things you need to do."

Now, let's suppose that right about here, and sometimes these amazing things happen, you get an about-face change in behavior. You can tell it. This guy suddenly gives up this other thing. And, to him, it is almost like defecting and going to Russia. It is a big, big, tremendous, unbelievable change. And now he is ready for your behavior modification; he is ready to start really changing. So you talk to him about some other things; tell him about his background; tell him how he developed; and tell him about his mama. You know all about his mama now, though you've never seen her; you don't have to read about it; you can tell from the way he acts in the institution. Talk to him about his tattoos, about how he put them on, what they meant, about the boy gang, and how he felt about these things.

You might talk to him about how he feels about girls. He has been threatened by mama, so he is afraid of girls, but naturally there is a sex urge. Every single one of them will tell you that they share their girls with the gang. This is the only way they know how to relate to girls; the gang comes first and the girls are just things to use. All these things you can tell him about himself and about his personal history, without ever knowing him. And, of course, he is astonished. How in the world does this guy know all about

me, because it is not written down anywhere? So, you do all this, then you show him you can outdo him in his game; you show him that you want to be his friend. You imply to him very subtly how his buddies have shot him down. They aren't to be trusted.

One thing is very important to remember here. Do not start this relationship with this guy unless you are prepared to go all the way with him. You may have to deal with him four years after he is out of the institution, hopefully not, but I tell you this because once he gives this up, you have got to stand by him; you have got to see him through. Once the relationship is established, you have taken on a father image to him, the first one he has ever had. And some very interesting things will occur. First, sibling rivalry will occur. You have no idea of how involved this becomes. He will get very mad about any other inmates taking up as much of your time as he does. He will even be very jealous of the attention you pay to some of the custody people. Your time is very, very important to him. You all of a sudden have become a very powerful reinforcer with this man. And, of course, you have to learn how to deal with this rivalry, because if you leave this guy alone when he needs the attention, he is going to do something to get your attention. Years ago I started off doing this kind of thing, and there are still a few guys left over that have gone and come back and still demand time. Very recently a young man whom I very rarely saw got in some trouble, some pretty serious trouble, and was about to really create a scene. This was a very small thing, and had I not already been his model, I perhaps would not have gotten involved. But since I had been his model, I dealt with this situation, and he, of course, was very sorry that he had done this thing; he was to the point of tears and all that. But later, after he had been placed in solitary isolation, he said, "I sure was a wretched person. I sure did the wrong thing." But then he said, "Now I want to tell you, the next time you ignore me, I am going to do something that will embarrass you worse than that." He actually verbalized his attention-getting intentions. More often the guys do it very subtly.

Years ago I used to deal with a man who was a drug addict. He had just about everything wrong with him one could have. Now he has been out of the institution five or six years, makes more money than I do, and is very successful. He finished trade school and went into business. He is quite a comedian and he used to tell me later, after he was released, about how he would start fooling with the medicine when he thought I was ignoring him. He knew I was really "gung ho" about keeping medicine out of the institution, and he would go to great lengths to get medicine in order to get my attention,

once nearly killing himself. He would do this, then he would just worry to death I wasn't going to find out about it.

One time he decided he was going to escape. So he sawed a bar out of the place in which he was working. He was going to pull out that night, and he was sure they would spot it before then. But he almost had to leave. It really scared him, and he said, "I thought I was going to have to do it before you found out about it." This is one of the things that arises. He has to have your attention, because he has given up a style of life for you. And he wants you to be there to continue to reassure him.

Well, what happens after you have gotten him this far? What's the next step? Let's say he wants to get into vocational school. And he really *wants* to go to vocational school; he doesn't want to work just to get out of something else. He doesn't want superficial change. He really desires to change, and he really wants to please you.

At this juncture, you have to reinforce him every step of the way, as often as you can. A word of caution, though. You should keep a watchful eye for backsliding. It isn't appropriate here to go into all of the ways you can tell if he is backsliding, but let it suffice to say that there are a variety of subtle ways in which you can detect this.

A related problem is that of his developing an exaggerated dependency. Once you detect this, you should begin to gradually dilute your relationship. Let him find some other reinforcers. For example, if he perhaps is enrolled in a vocational class, such as welding, let the welding instructor function as his reinforcer. Encourage the relationship to develop.

Approximately at this stage of your relationship with the inmate, you should take care to note evidence of any special psychological problem he might have, in which case, of course, he should be referred to a psychologist or a psychiatrist. However, excluding any extraordinary psychological problems, you should now begin to concentrate upon what I call dilution, upon preparing him to live outside with some sort of environmental support. Remember, I'm not talking about first offenders; I'm talking about a guy whom all of you would say hasn't got a chance. Now he must have, when he gets out, some sort of environmental support. This may involve counseling his wife to provide such support. It may involve counseling with his wife and his mother. It may involve counseling with his employer. It may involve special help from his parole officer, a very important source of environmental support. You have also got to organize, or, better, help him to organize, a vocational rehabilitation program and so forth. But he needs this additional support and, if he has it, he can very probably live outside and live there very successfully.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: Do you find it easier to work with younger inmates?

Answer: Not necessarily, because I think this is another myth that we have had. Certainly, in learning theory, you know that the earlier you learn something the stronger and more it is going to be reinforced as time goes on. But there are some other things working over there too. Generally speaking, with younger inmates it would be easier, but not always. Sometimes an older man realizes how desperately he needs help.

Question: How long does something like this take?

Answer: You mean how long will the generalizing take? I think it again depends on the individual, but I think the ordinary 30-day period should be effective in most cases. Now there are going to be a few guys with whom you can't quite cut the umbilical cord that easily, but, too, with a lot of them, it won't take that much time. This is one of the problems created, dependency, and I guarantee it is important. It would depend on the case.

Question: Are you using the team approach on this?

Answer: This is what we are working up to right now. These things take time I'm telling you. I've done them. I've taught some other individuals to do it, and now we are trying to teach everybody how to do it. The total institution becomes a stimulus control situation for change, rather than for criminal behavior. Then you can't help from changing behavior; then the man would have to be helpless not to change.

Question: Would this program help the one who likes prison so much he steals to get back in?

Answer: I think so. I think you have to, let's find him some reinforcers outside of the prison that are more important than those inside. But, you know,

it is no use getting all excited 'cause a guy comes back. You know we have, as correctional people, a tendency to be judgemental. There's no point in acting "holier than thou" because he's come back after all the good things we have done for him. If he comes back we will try to crank him up again.

Question: What if he said he did it 'cause all of his friends are in prison anyway?

Answer: This is exactly what we are trying to overcome, certainly this is very important. When he has a new skill and a new belief system, he can do it more easily.

Question: What happens when this man leaves prison and loses his contact?

Answer: This is what I mentioned, environmental support, you have got to start diluting this dependency he has on you and the parole officer very quickly, especially if he is on parole. We have very successfully done this with several fellows. He goes from me to the parole officer. He will first come back to you and you kind of say, 'Now wait; now you go to see Mr. So-and-So about it.' He will be heartbroken for awhile, but then his parole officer moves in on him and pretty soon you will never hear from him again. You will just know from the parole officer that he is doing great.

Question: How do the officers who have been there for years react to it?

Answer: Now as I said, we are just moving into it for all of them, but I was surprised. And I have been with this institution thirteen years and that is a long time and you can see a lot of things happen. You see, as I mentioned, the correctional officer has been shot down pretty much, especially their authority in an institution. And now, with a new role in which they can really do something that the psychiatrist can't do and somebody else can't do, it makes them feel pretty important. And it is pretty important.

Question: What kind of discipline do you administer?

Answer: We have punitive isolation and withdrawal of privileges, and we set up recently, now this might interest you, an application of behavior modification techniques by a correctional officer. One of our main reasons a fellow has to go to isolation is because they were missing their back-gate assignments. That is where the men go out to work, that is, they go outside the institution to work in the fields and so forth. And we do not wake people up, you know, like in the military, where they shake the bed and march and all that. We blow a bugle and get everybody awake, and then it is their job to fix up their area and go to breakfast and go to work. He has to go to work himself; that is his responsibility. But a lot of guys oversleep and miss.

So we had a meeting. I had one of the behavior modification experts sort of back me up and we said what can we do about stopping this kind of behavior? How can we change it? This is a plan they came up with that just worked beautifully: If a fellow misses the back gate, that is he just doesn't go, or if he is ten minutes too late or five minutes too late, he is carried directly to work, but he loses something very important to him, his visiting and his mailing privileges. Now how does he get them back? This is not done by me. This was done by the correctional officers with the help of the experts who, you know, gave them technical advice. They get them back by going to the back gate for two weeks (ten working days) on time every time. And there was a prerequisite to this, that he must receive a good report from the officer carrying this guy to the farm every day for two weeks. So this works beautifully, practically nobody misses the back gate and they learn a new kind of behavior. The right kind of behavior is being reinforced.

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